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SUBJECT: Meeting with Rene Abandi June 14, 2008

1. (SBU) Summary. USAID and OCHA representatives met with CNDP spokesman Rene Abandi June 14 to raise concerns regarding several recent developments, including a CNDP letter attacking NGOs, its demand for involvement in humanitarian decisions in its territory, withdrawal of its forces from the area around the Kimoka "peace camp" and its withdrawal from the Amani programs military subcommission. Abandi appeared to promise action in some areas, but his influence on CNDP decision-makers is unclear. End summary.

2. (SBU) USAID Goma Liaison Officer and Gloria Fernandez of OCHA met with CNDP spokesman Rene Abandi June 14 in an effort to persuade CNDP to: (a) remove a letter attacking NGOs from its website; (b) back off demands for full CNDP involvement in humanitarian decision-making in areas under its control; (c) withdraw militarily from the Kimoka area; and (d) return as full participants to the military sub-commission of the Amani program's Joint Technical Commission on Peace and Security (CTMPS).

3. (SBU) Fernandez said the letter posted June 5 on CNDP's website was not helpful. Abandi agreed to have it removed.

4. (SBU) Fernandez and USAID Liaison Officer said that demands for full CNDP participation in humanitarian decision-making could not and would not be agreed to by any agency. Abandi agreed that they were perhaps not appropriate. He said he would take steps to work the issue within the CNDP, and intended to resolve it.

5. (SBU) USAID Liaison Officer said that MONUC was building a temporary camp at Kimoka and USAID was preparing to build the "permanent" camp. He said now was the time to evacuate CNDP troops from the agreed-upon 12 km square area around the camp. He gave Abandi a sketch of the area to be evacuated, and said he had given Nkunda a detailed sketch as well. Abandi asked if the FARDC was going to pull back as well; USAID Liaison Officer replied that this had not been part of the bargain. Abandi agreed to work to persuade CNDP to move its forces out of the area.

6. (SBU) Abandi appeared to be somewhat sympathetic to a CNDP return to the CMTPS military sub-commission, but could not offer much encouragement, citing higher authorities within CNDP. USAID Liaison Officer asked him if Nkunda's participation as an expert and not as leader of the brassage cell would allow things to go forward; Abandi was unable to provide an answer.

7. (SBU) Abandi noted that the following day marked two months since the GDRC's self-imposed deadline for a public awareness campaign aimed at the FDLR. He said he intended to call a press conference to highlight how little the GDRC had done actually done against the FDLR.

8. (SBU) Comment: Abandi's influence vis-a-vis CNDP decision makers is unclear. The conversation appeared to go well in several areas, but we will have to see what the CNDP actually does. End comment.